organised marketing services to a very large number of Government Departments and Public Sector Undertakings for the disposal of metal scrap arisings.

Heavy losses by Engineering Projects India Limited

*220. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD:

DR. SHRIKANT RAM-CHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Engineering Projects India Limited has incurred heavy losses in the execution of projects undertaken by them abroad particularly in Kuwait and Iraq;

(b) if so, the details of these losses and reasons therefor;

(c) steps taken/to be taken to fix the responsibility; and

(d) in what manner the losses will be prevented in future?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Engineering Projects (India) Ltd. (EPI) had undertaken works in Kuwait and Iraq from 1975 to 1984. The losses have been mainly because of time and cost overrun due to interruption of work caused by Iran-Iraq hostilities, rigid and unreasonable attitude of the clients regarding quality certification, delayed payment of EPI's bills by Iraqi clients, and heavy interest burden on loans taken from banks during the execution of projects in Iraq and Kuwait. These losses have been to the extent of Rs.79.49 crore.

(c) Consequent to the observations made by COPU in its Second Report (1991-92), a committee was appointed to identify the losses and fix responsibility. The lapses identified were mismanagment and were of administrative nature. Since the officials held responsible had either expired or were no longer with the company, no administrative or legal action was possible.

(d) The company has been debarred from taking up overseas projects. Besides, the following steps have been taken by the Managment of EPI to prevent losses in future:

1. Delegation of authority has been clearly defined by the Board and monitoring * systems have been strengthened.
2. It has been decided not to release ad-hoc advances to sub-contractors.
3. Strict vigil maintained on materials for construction and cost of construction.
4. Engaging consultant for design has been minimised.
5. Organisation structure has been rationalised. An Executive Director (Vigilance) has been appointed on deputation basis.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Employees Suspended in Super Bazar

1479. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of employees have remained suspended in Super Bazar for many years;

(b) if so, the number of employees who have remained suspended for more than six months, one year, two years, three years and more than five years as on 1st March, 1997;

(c) the rules regarding payment of subsistence allowance to the suspended employees;

(d) whether the percentage of subsistence allowance remains static or increases over a period of time; and

(e) whether employees suspended earlier are being paid less percentage of subsistence allowance than the employees suspended later and if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) According to the information furnished by the Super Bazar, Delhi as on 1st March, 1997, 22 employees were under suspension as under:—

Period for which suspension	No. of employees under
More than 6 months	3
More than 1 year	7
More than 2 years	2
More than 3 years	6
More than 5 years	4
	22

(c) and (d) As per rules of Super Bazar, the suspension allowance is payable at the rate of 50% of the salary. However, modification of these rules is under consideration of the Management.

(c) As reported by Super Bazar, in case of one suspended employee, the subsistence allowance is being paid at the rate of 75% of the salary on grounds of his poor financial status.

Malpractices by Fair Price Shop Owners in Maharashtra

1480. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES. CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the poor State of PDS in Maharashtra particularly in the rural and tribal areas due to the rampant malpractices by the Fair Price Shop owners;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to conduct a survey in this regard throughout the State instead of depending upon the reports submitted by State Government; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Public Distribution System (PDS) is implemented under the joint responsibility of Central and State Governments. Operational responsibility of implementation of PDS lies with State Governments. No major complaints have been received from State Government regarding malpractices by Fair Price Shop owners in Maharashtra.

Increase of Issue Prices in PDS

1481. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the commodities falling under the Public Distribution Scheme whose issue prices have been increased during the current year;

(b) the extent of increase in case of each commodity; and

(c) the position of the scheme with regard to issue of cereals at half the issue price to the people living below the poverty line, by when this scheme is likely to be made effective?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) During the current year, the price of sugar has been raised from Rs. 9.05 per kg. to Rs. 10.50 per kg. with effect from 10th February, 1997.

Under the Trageted Public Distribution System (TPDS), issue price of Rice and Wheat has been fixed separately for Below Poverty Line (BPL) Population and above Poverty Line (APL) population as follows: